



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES



3 3433 07490118 6

RUE





A

RUE

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized, cursive letter 'g' with a long, sweeping tail that curves upwards and to the right.

NEM
Houster

10

A

RUE

RUE

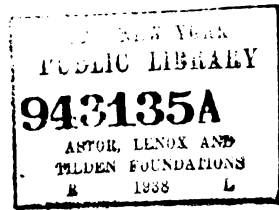
BY

LAURENCE
HOUSMAN

LONDON: AT THE SIGN
OF THE UNICORN. 1899

F.P

NEW YORK
PUBLIC
LIBRARY



Chiswick Press : Charles Whittingham and Co.
Tooks Court, Chancery Lane, London.

ROYAL
LIBRARY
MANUSCRIPTS
DEPARTMENT

1938

TRANSFER FROM C. C. MAR

"YOU MAY WEAR YOUR RUB WITH A
DIFFERENCE."

CONTENTS

I

	Page
Never shall life clear utterance show	3
If all the needs in all the hearts	5
Life wrought me at the forge of death	6
Long through the night the new-born lamb	7
If you must do the thing you fear	9
Oh, safely in my dreams you laid	11
The blood of Abel in me cries	12
With me early, with me late	13
Thou breast of all bright things, thou Earth	14
Dear garden face, with eyes of dawn	16
With arms that oared at easy length	17
Amid this grave-strewn, flowerless place	19
Dear love, when with a twofold mind	20
What know ye of the wounds of Christ	21
Grant that I have no other claim	22
Now that I know you, dear, by heart	23
You hear a blind man preach the light	24
Now day by day my love is set	25
Oh, Love, leave other hearts to fail	26
When we are parting face from face	27
Fair eyes, that never did offend	28
You, the dear trouble of my days	30
Two masks my fate reserves for me	31

II

	Page
Of old betwixt the gods and earth	35
Two breasts to her unhappy brood	36
The land's arms loose me, and I taste	38
What farewell can I wish you now	39
Ah, no ! beloved, you part not hence	40
Round this dark ship that bears me on	41
Dark to its nest the light has gone	42
The death-white horses crest and turn	43
Oh, like-unlike, a difference strange	44
Here where the Rome of nations stands	45
Where, perfected in flesh and bone	47
Great Mother, dwelling in the shade	49
In sackcloth shrouds they rise from rest	51
To the Tree of Life on Judgment Day	52
Against my flesh Love hangs to die	53
How this sad place deserted grown	54
This is the grave which year by year	56
From these thy servants who behold	57
"Sing once for joy !" spake Love, and bowed	59
Across these barren clods of clay	60
I, too, hear how the lover sings	62
Only two hands has Love to lend	63
Living, I feel the feet that tread	64
High overhead the clock that tolls	65
Life flutters from the wooded brow	66

III

	Page
O ghostly dawn, that whitenest now	71
Pale stranger, with the uplifted face	72
Now round you spreads and flows a rest	73
Why dream for you, dear vanished friend	74
The Soul bereaved, the Flesh defiled	75
Out of the heart of night a hand	76
So much strong weakness holds me bound	77
Send forth Thy winds, O God, to blow	78
Ghosts of sweet wants, ye touch and leave	79
Whenever blows a passing gust	80
Is living still my debt to thee	81
O Lord of Love, Who holdest light	82
Here name and date are worn away	83
Me did self-love or love most move	84
Though thou art changed, thou bearest whole	85
Oh ! strange, 'mid severance of love	86
Let not the love you learned on earth	87
Where my word fails thy word amends	88
Out of the earth that holds you bound	89
Spring comes with silent rush of leaf	91
The Earth her troubled seasons brings	93
As by the motion of her arc	94

I

B

RUE

NEVER shall life clear utterance show
To melt the hearts of men:
Hark back three thousand years, and know
How tongues had labour then ;

When God, who gathers north and south
To marvel at His ways,
Opened of old the ass's mouth,
And filled it to His praise.

But when Love bowed His Body whole
To death, for the dark East,
Then hung before men's eyes a Soul
More dumb than any beast.

**His lips, Who spake as no man spake,
Nothing at all availed :
They gave Him vinegar to take,
And wagged their heads and railed.**

**So ye, the seers, and ye that seek,
Fellows with Him must be :
Only the dumb of heart can speak,
Or the blind think they see.**

If all the needs in all the hearts
Of all the world were one,
We could afford to drop our parts
Nor wait to watch the sun,

Which counts the days that gather in
Toward the wished-for end,
Where pleasure can no more be sin,
Nor friend want help of friend.

But now how fast the coil of things
Holds each man to his part,
While here, with hidden wants, there clings
To each an alien heart !

Nor from myself can I be freed
To lay me down and die,
Because of all the hearts in need
Of comfort less than I !

**LIFE wrought me at the forge of death,
Love shaped my reins for sin :
They stirred, to fodder me with breath
The pit they digged me in.**

**They bade me tasks that seemed to heal
The bitter light of day :
I fed the forge, I trod the wheel,
And I built up the clay.**

**And when upon no shifting sands
My labour was grown whole,
They laughed, and put into my hands
A clean and human soul :**

**And half undid the bands of fear
That held me back from bliss,
And daily whispered in my ear
Their bidding, "Curse thou this !"**

Long through the night the new-born lamb
Utters its first complaint ;
Against the body of its dam
The cry goes low and faint.

Till faint against the dawn the birth
Which bears a twilight's span
Shall pass, and let alone to earth
The sorry needs of man.

Now, ere the covering darkness yields,
Lie down, dear lamb, lie down :
Better to die here in the fields
Than yonder in the town ;

Where fast before the butchering knife
A dumb death thins the herd.
Oh, better now to part from life
While life seems worth a word !

**Out on the downs the shepherds cry,
The silly sheep-dogs yelp :
Then, quickly ease my heart, and die,
Lest I should bring you help !**

If you must do the thing you fear,
I would I were the sin,
To knock against your heart, my dear,
Until you let me in !

To sleep with you, and wake with you,
Lie down with you, and rise,
And let you feel the sunshine through
My love upon your eyes.

Oh, many a time you may prevail
With God, and rise as white
As you lay down ; yet you shall fail
Some solitary night !

Then, lest the ill outlast the will,
How well would serve a friend
To devil for your heart until
You meant the thing to end !

For then, my dear, if I were there,
I would not be your foe :
You need but breathe the faintest prayer,
And I would let you go.

Oh, safely in my dreams you laid
Kind pardon on my heart,
And fair amends to you I made
While we stood far apart.

But, now the far becomes the near
And once again we meet,
Sorrow so holds the heart, my dear,
You may not hear it beat.

A day ago, an hour, and how
I longed to find you near ;
Now round me grow your arms, and now
My heart has died for fear !

And ghastlier thought takes shape behind,
Lest, if I love you more,
I some dark morning wake to find
You dead against my door !

**THE blood of Abel in me cries,
"Give me the curse of Cain ;
Let me have vengeance from the skies,
Lest I be dead in vain !"**

**Hot for deliverance I wait
The cleaving of the clod :—
Give me my murderer to hate,
Lest hate go back to God !**

**Or, if there be no strength above,
Whence justice may be shed :—
Give me my murderer to love,
Since that will serve instead !**

With me early, with me late,
The face of my spent youth :
Of youth that made a friend of fate,
And thought the friendship truth.

But now 'tis—how to bear the sun !
If fate demands, o'er all
The ills I wish to do, the one
I struggle to let fall.

With me early, with me late,
A bitter thing to rue :
The wrong set down for me by fate,
The wrong I would not do.

Thou breast of all bright things, thou Earth,
Where I was lapped ere day
Drew me from darkness unto birth,
Fair mother of my clay,

Now night and day, where'er I go,
I seem to hear thee cry,
"O child, what hast thou learned to know
Of signs beneath the sky?"

And I bend down, and answer back,
"I learn there is no rest,
On sea or land, for those who lack
The covering of thy breast."

Then she: "What hast thou there, weak heart,
That will not let thee free?"
"Dear grief, from which I cannot part,
And love, too strong for me!"

**“ And dearer to my heart than rest
This love that burns like fire ;
And closer than your breast the breast
Of grief that quells desire !**

**DEAR garden face, with eyes of dawn,
Where all my gladness grows,
Now breaks upon your secret lawn
The slumber of the rose.**

**So while the dawn-fire flushes low
To warm the world, oh, haste !
Awake, arise, sweet breath, and blow
Across this barren waste !**

**Lest now the gates of my desire
Undo their bolts of ice,
Bidding me pass the sword of fire
Which guards my Paradise.**

With arms that oared at easy length
And buoyant draught of breath,
When dawn threw out its shining strength
Our bodies played with death.

Fathom on fathom under foot
The folded seas were deep :
Where day drew forth its mandrake root,
There under us lay sleep.

Your dear arms faltered ; your young eyes
Caught half the daylight down :
And " Quick ! " you sobbed, in broken sighs,
" Quick ! help me, or I drown ! "

Help you ? The sea lay full below
Fathom on fathom deep,
It was but one straight road to go :
And in the sea lay sleep !

So strong the wish : then, surely, brake
The link that bound in me
Body with soul ;—that, for your sake,
My soul gave up the sea!

Whelmed beyond reach of any coast
My body comes no more :
Deep is its death. It is my ghost
Has brought you back to shore.

**AMID this grave-strewn, flowerless place
A dead man prays in stone :
Worn with the weather, how the face
Looks like a mask of bone !**

**From praying feet to praying hands,
Prayer will not let him go :
Still patiently his face withstands
God's everlasting No.**

**For still to all the plea he gives
God's word long since was said :
And still the foolish faith outlives
The mercy which lies dead.**

**The praying stone wears down to dust ;
And every day that dies
It proffers with a piteous trust
The prayer that God denies.**

DEAR love, when with a twofold mind
I pray for bitter grace;
And from my pit of torment find
Your breath upon my face,

And hear you without thought of fear
Bid me to guard you well,
And guide your footsteps to win clear—
When my feet walk in hell :

I wonder, how can God be glad
To hear men praise Him so,
Who makes His piteous earth so sad
A lot to undergo ?

Or does He too dip Feet in fire,
And share the thirster's thirst ;
And listen to man's great desire
Holding a Heart to burst ?

WHAT know ye of the wounds of Christ,
Ye friends for whom He died ?
For you at least the love sufficed,
When Love was crucified.

For you, whose feet He plucked from hell,
He perished not in vain :
For you, when that He died, He fell
That He might rise again.

I watch the wounds : for me how vain
The blood-drops from His side,
Poor God, Who perished in His pain,
Curst, spit upon, denied !

Little ye know the pangs He bore,
Ye friends whom Love forgave :
There was a bitterer wound He wore
For souls He could not save.

**GRANT that I have no other claim,
Condemned in all I do :
Of every deed I bear the blame,
Proved false to all but you.**

**Most false to this now piteous me,
That, of itself bereft,
Strives to have loss that gain may be ;
And, robbed, commits the theft.**

**And yet not false, whate'er befall,
If truth be found in you.
So, since you are my all in all,
Am I not all proved true ?**

Now that I know you, dear, by heart,
This kinship makes us one ;
Yet nearness puts us more apart,
More dear, but more undone.

For while you tell me of your grief,
Such sorrow finds me old :
Your breath hath stirred a withered leaf,
And cast it to the mould.

Thus, of the years that lie before,
I from my darkness guess
How I must know you more and more,
And you must know me less.

And while my heart responsive hears
Your inmost griefs uncloset,—
How fast the covering silence rears !
How deep the secret grows !

**You hear a blind man preach the light
Wherein he never dwelt,
Because his hands can handle right
The darkness that is felt.**

**O Face of Love, to which I kneel,
What likeness lies between
This touch of hands outstretched to heal,
These lips that cry "unclean" ?**

**But when these hands have hold on fire,
And these lips fire for breath,
And life goes down to its desire
In the red pit of death :**

**Then, clear of sight in that far place,
I may lift eyes above,
And see you looking in God's Face,
O face I used to love !**

Now day by day my love is set
To make the severance grow ;
By speech to hold you fast, and yet
Mutely to bid you go.

By all I will to all I would,
I to our parting press,
And seek by signs half understood
To make you love me less.

And while you stay and trust me still,
Fear leaps upon my heart,—
Lest, in the dark ways of His will,
God means us not to part !

**Oh, Love, leave other hearts to fail ;
Our love shall arch the skies !
And other loves through ours prevail,
When we have closed our eyes !**

**Surely the day to which we win
Draws on through hours of dread,
To close the covering darkness in,
And hold us in one bed.**

**WHEN we are parting face from face
Each to a destined end,
I know that God shall find no trace
In you of me, your friend.**

**There where I trod the way was wide,
With room enough for two ;
And yet I put you from my side,
That God might look-on you:**

**And I have bowed Him from His height
To take this gift of me,
That pure and holy for His sight
I left you utterly.**

**For single as the Heart of God,
My heart that loved you well
Died for you all the while I trod
The downward path to hell.**

FAIR eyes, that never did offend
Love that for you grew blind,
Say, have you found in me the friend
That you had need to find ?

Or have I failed, who day by day
Forbore to reach my end,
Because of looks that seemed to say—
“ Stay with me ; be my friend ! ”

And I, to meet your lesser need,
Gave mine :—a dear exchange !
Now, if you saw my eyes indeed,
How you would find them strange !

Dear love, try still to be content :
Long since for you I died ;
And still to cheer your heart there went
A stranger at your side.

Now, wish me well, and pass me by!
Soon shall my rest be deep,
When full upon my eyes shall lie
The desert sands of sleep.

You, the dear trouble of my days,
When life shall let me cease,
Turn once aside from kinder ways
And look upon my peace !

Let your feet rest upon my roof,
And for the love we bore,
Forgive the heart, so far aloof,
You cannot trouble more.

For, if the dead man had his will,
I doubt not he would rise,
And waste his soul in sorrow still
With looking on your eyes.

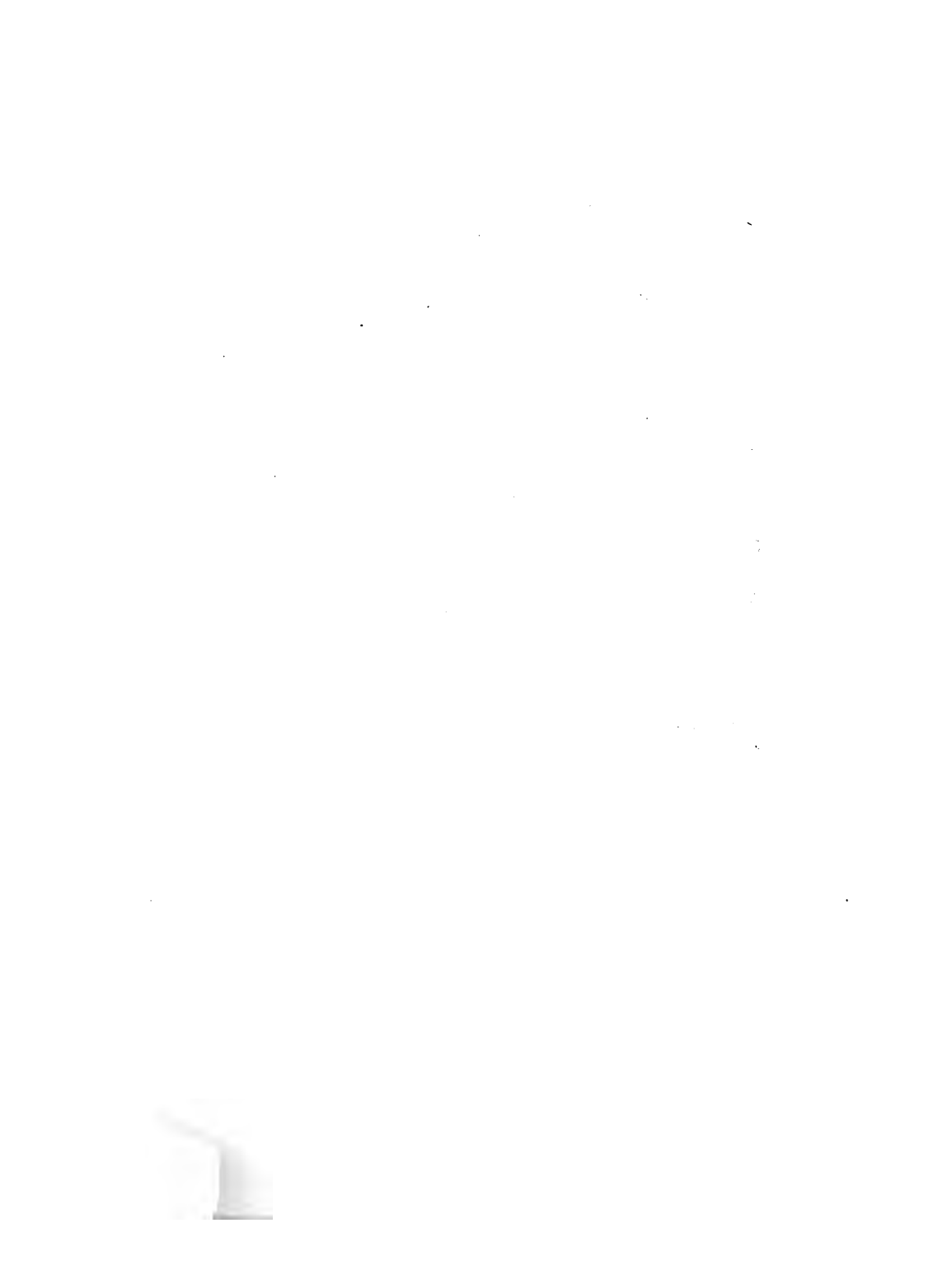
So come when you have lost your power,
And pardon my release :
And set your feet to rest an hour,
A seal upon my peace.

Two masks my fate reserves for me,
Whichever way I fare :
Then, must the easier mask not be
The better one to wear ?

For here indeed the mask fits well ;
But oh, the weary pact !
How I must mouth, and strut, and swell,
To while away the act !

But then, the ease to bitter breath,
The stay to wordy strife,
When I put on the mask of death,
And drop the mask of life !

And death will lay an easier grace
Than life around my head :
You will not understand my face
The better when I'm dead.



II

D

OF old betwixt the gods and earth
High-headed, girt with cloud
Dividing misery and mirth,
Old Atlas stood and bowed.

Close to the high celestial gate
He bent a drowsy brain :
While far below his feet set weight
On furrowed fields of pain.

The earth's far cry sang faint, and dim
Her face toward him grew :
His head was crowned with light ; round him
The immortal laughters flew.

And yet he tired of that high place,
And thrust away the prize :
Lifting a dead, indignant face
Of stone toward the skies.

Two breasts to her unhappy brood
Uplifts our mother Earth,
And tenders to their cry for food
Her ministry of dearth.

So, wistfully from breast to breast
She draws the lips that crave ;
And lies importunately pressed
By mouths she may not save :

As if her violated clay,
Sown with unnatural seed,
Had by some god's despotic sway
Given forth a monster breed.

So half her breast she shrouds in leaves
To hide the piteous scars ;
And half, a barren breast, she heaves
And bares to all the stars.

O mother, lift me from the land,
And give me breast by sea ;
And leave me room where I may stand
And starve unnursed by thee !

THE land's arms loose me, and I taste
The full draught of the sea :
Out of the flesh and all its waste
A spirit plucks at me.

O spirit, brooding on the waves,
Blow through me with thy breath ;
And bear me to the unmounded graves
Which thou hast smoothed for death !

And in the welcome of thy smile,
Old furrowed face of dearth,
Fold me, and let me for a while
Forget my mother earth.

WHAT farewell can I wish you now,
Of all farewells the best ?
Love, if my lips no words allow,
There must confession rest :

Against this lonely heart to tell
The best wish that may be :
Oh, may you, if you would fare well,
Fare well away from me !

Ah, no ! beloved, you part not hence :
In the most middle night,
I hold close gathered to each sense
Love that outpasses sight.

Out of this coil is no escape ;
And naught can parting do !
I look upon too like a shape,
Love, when I look on you.

So let me bear until I die
An undeparting guest :
O face of love, come back and lie
In shadow on my breast !

Round this dark ship that bears me on
There broods a wasteful calm ;
As though it breathed from Avalon,
The sea-breeze pours its balm.

And night and day beside the ship
There walks upon the wave
A form I know, with prayer on lip,
And hands too weak to save.

Yet, should I stoop my lips to drain
The draught they long for best,
Those hands would have me fast again
And snatch me back from rest.

**DARK to its nest the light has gone ;
An unseen force prevails,
And hands of storm lay hold upon
The rigging and the sails.**

**High heaves the heart of night, and loud
The water sobs and breaks,
And overhead one helmet-cloud
Its cap of darkness makes.**

**Strong wants whereto the welkin moves,
They are but waifs like me ;
And all a storm of severed loves
That strain across the sea !**

**THE death-white horses crest and turn,
Their gleaming saddles glide :
Have I no senses to discern
The riders as they ride ?**

**O death-white horse, in this dark race
Outcresting all your crew,
With foaming flank, and furious pace,
Who is it rides on you ?**

**Nay, follow not so hard on me,
Who ride to death alone :
White horse, pace gently, lest I see
Your rider overthrown !**

Oh, like-unlike, a difference strange
Your soul from mine divides :
Out of one prison-house we range
To follow different guides.

And led by hands of death or birth
To live again or die,
Severed by all the paths of earth
Our fates divided lie.

And still 'twixt life and death I ask
The Darkness named divine,
Why bound He in so fair a mask
A soul so close to mine ?

**HERE where the Rome of nations stands
On mounds of buried breath,
Sits one who holds in hollow hands
The keys of life and death.**

**Oh, heavy come the poor in heart,
And rich return they home ;
Since well performs his proper part
The middleman of Rome !**

**About the holy beaten ground
The nations on their knees
Hark, while with apostolic sound
Loud creak the golden keys.**

**And, though the hingeless doors be dumb,
With solemn hand and show
The porter lets the weak man come,
And lets the strong man go.**

**But while he spreads his lavish hands
Across the hill-tops seven,
Dark Angelo like Atlas stands
Dividing earth from Heaven.**

In the
Sistine
Chapel

WHERE, perfected in flesh and bone,
Earth's crowned creation ends :
There with a universal groan
The cry of life ascends.

To Heaven's dark doors soul bound in sense
Has pushed its furthest cry,—
“ Reach down, O Lord, and take us hence
That neither live nor die !

“ Thou, that hast shaped our suffering thus,
Grant us this last relief :
Be sorry now, and loose from us
The glory and the grief !

**“ Since Thou hast given us to corrupt
Flesh and fair earth, now scan
Thy making, surfeited and supped,
Thy maggot-worker, man ! ”**

**O Counsel-Darkener, over me
Still let Thy glooms expand ;
More darkness, Lord !—lest I should see
Thy Face, and understand !**

**GREAT Mother, dwelling in the shade
Of altars, over glooms
Monastic, where long prayer is made
By dead men out of tombs :**

**Thou hearest how thy barren sons
For life's denial beseech :
Yet some of those were fruitful once,
Their lips found flowers to reach.**

**Therefore, to cheer their hearts, send down,
Even to the lowest place,
Thy mother-word from that fair Town
Where loves come face to face.**

**'Mid shadowing of celestial doves
Bring pity to the dead,
O Thou Madonna of the loves
Of hearts that could not wed !**

**But here, O Maiden of the East,
To me Thy voice is dumb ;
Unto thy final gathering-feast
My love can never come.**

**For I am bound to other marts
Where meagre are Love's doles,
And men lay by their broken hearts,
But not their broken souls.**

In sackcloth shrouds they rise from rest ;
They pray from bleeding knees :—
Ah, Christ ! what grapes of love grow pressed
Against the lips of these ?

Out of the smitten flesh and bone,
Old heats of earlier days,
A blood-red vintage fills with moan
The wine-press of Thy praise.

Which at Thy feast being lifted up
Before celestial eyes :—
What ghosts out of the bloody cup,
What ghosts of men must rise !

To the Tree of Life on Judgment Day
Spake the poor poison-tree,
“ Within my sap came death to stay
When life first looked on me.

“ But from thy boughs there went a breath,
Thy shadow on me fell :
And nothing have I done for death,
Because I loved thee well.

“ So I was barren for thy sake,
Though little else I did :
Here, Lord, as in a napkin take
The talent that I hid !

“ Now am I weary : therefore shift
The burden of thy breath ;
Have back again thy bitter gift,
Who gavest life to Death ! ”

**AGAINST my flesh Love hangs to die
As on the accursèd tree :
I am the rood where he lays by
His wronged humanity.**

**The wounds which pierce the hands of Love,
Driven by the hands of hate,
Stand also in my flesh to prove
The bitterness of fate.**

**Here Love lies dying on my breast,
His sorrow half laid by :
Soon shall he enter to his rest,
When, ah, no rest have I !**

**An empty
Hermitage**

**How this sad place deserted grown
Speaks of an old despair :
In ghostly dints the weary stone
Is hollowed out with prayer ;**

**As if each day, where lips of dearth
Cried for a barren clod,
Some want had worn the face of earth,
Since not the Face of God.**

**Who knows in what dark anguish ailed
Yon soul of flesh and bone ?
The prayer, because the spirit failed,
Hath carved itself in stone.**

**O hollow stone, of hollow prayer
You make a weary jest :
For prayers that failed did earth prepare
This hollow place of rest ?**

**The Holy
Sepulchre**

**THIS is the grave which year by year
Gives up its ghostly dead :
Of all poor graves least rest is here,
Where Love laid down his head !**

**The heart's desire of heart-sick lands
How shall men leave alone ?
Therefore they come with pious hands
And roll away the stone.**

**So year by year, as dawn brings gloom
To light, and earth waits dumb,
Uneasy from the open tomb
The ghostly Easters come.**

**A Prayer to
the giver of
Evil**

**From these thy servants who behold
Thy face continually,
To whom I gave sad gifts of gold ;—
Shall this my guerdon be ?**

**Since once I served them, wasting so
My substance at their board,
Have they no broken meats to throw
The beggar of their lord ?**

**Thy swine, they lack not to be fed,
Though I stand famished by ;
And all thy hirelings eat thy bread,
When I for hunger die !**

**The meats stand ready to be carved,
The sparkling wines are spiced :
Then, give me room, lest I be starved
Back to the Feet of Christ !**

**"Sing once for joy!" spake Love, and bowed
His light toward my face,
From that deep covering of cloud
Which is his dwelling-place.**

**I lifted up my heart, and sang;
And far aloft went loud
A shuddering note of joy which sprang
To kiss the upper cloud.**

**But on that fair celestial tent
My praises cast a stain:
The cloud that was Love's covering rent
And poured itself in rain.**

Across these barren clods of clay
Whenever a wind blows,
Between them and the warmth of day,
Stir shadows of the rose.

There, while the roses dance in air
And light winds whisper round,
Below them shadows foot to share
A ghostly dance on ground.

How coldly feels that barren bed
Those motions of delight !
It cares not if the rose be red,
Or if the rose be white.

For be the roses white as snow,
Or be they red as shame,
With ghostly footsteps to and fro
Their shadows walk the same.

**“ Alas ! ” complains the barren clod,
“ Their dance is never done :
And all their duty is to nod
Between me and the sun ! ”**

I, too, hear how the lover sings
Love like a flower unfurled ;
I hear the viols, the flutes and strings
Of this great moaning world.

I feel the innumerable dance
Tingle beneath my tread ;
I see the season's happy chance,
And grain-fields harvested.

I, too, could sing had I not this
To bind upon my brain,
That all these myriad notes of bliss
Make one great voice of pain :

That, though I lay all sorrow by
And make glad songs my own,
They will not lessen as they die
The universal moan.

**ONLY two hands has Love to lend
The many hands that plead,
Only one heart where to befriend
All kindred hearts in need.**

**Eyes, lips, and hands, cannot suffice
To comfort the sick earth,
Whose children bear the hard device
And bondage of their birth.**

**But one illimitable share
Is theirs, that all who will,
In want and weakness and despair
Can take their utmost fill :**

**One gift that brings a sure relief
To toiling human breath,
That through a thousand wounds of grief
Each heart may bleed to death.**

LIVING, I feel the feet that tread
My burial-plot of ground,
As if they grudged the tired dead
A sleep that is too sound.

Tread softly, you, and you, for I,—
Truly I know you not !
Leave, where the dead man has to lie,
The quiet of his lot.

But if, at crossing of love's ways,
Feet from a distant land
Stood now, where after many days
I shall come, not to stand ;

Then there would grow a light above
This darkness of my breast,
And I should know the feet I love
Had touched my place of rest.

High overhead the clock that tolls
The passing knell of noon
Suspends its sentence, and there rolls
No prelude of its tune.

The heavy minute-hand creeps in,
And hard upon the hour
The other hand keeps hold to win
The voices from the tower.

Till half they seem like faring feet
Toward that destined spot
Where the two hands of Time shall meet
On me, and I be not.

Oh, let my brain get quit of power,
And let the word be soon,
When iron hands shall clasp the hour
That cries my note of noon !

LIFE flutters from the wooded brow,
A slow breath sadly drawn :
With gray wings beating comest thou,
Shy heron of the dawn !

And ever on from deep to deep
Of space the errand flies,
And breaks in starry pools of sleep
The dreams of lover's eyes.

Then on until, where east is west,
Still westward called away,
On weary feathers sinks to rest
A tender-breasted day.

.

And once again I dream how light
Across the breasts of space
Goes moving onward into sight
Of one beloved face ;

**Till cold across the ashen east
Returns the gray-winged day :
And, beak and claws flushed red from feast,
There hangs a bird of prey !**

III

O GHOSTLY dawn, that whitenest now
The chilly-breathing earth,
This face of life why liftest thou,
If death be brought to birth ?

Can there be any death to live,
Or any life to die,
Unknown to me, that thou canst give
To put my darkness by ?

Pale mother, from between thy feet
Cometh a still-born day,
Where life and I can never meet
Till light be put away.

**PALE stranger, with the uplifted face
That seals its looks at me,
Come you to fill the empty place
Where love was wont to be ?**

**In your dull heart without alarms
If any love abide,
Reach up and take me in your arms
And draw me to your side !**

**Or else, by what deep purpose stayed,
To what diviner end,
Grows this defeat, where fate hath made
A stranger of my friend ?**

**For I am like a withered brook
Which water runs not through,
Since Death hath laid a dear rebuke
On all my thoughts of you.**

Now round you spreads and flows a rest
From which no word can come.
Whom have you there for secret guest,
Now that your lips are dumb?

Death holds the heart that used to beat
For me; he holds your breath;
He has you fast from face to feet.
Ah, would that I were death!

**WHY dream for you, dear vanished friend,
The peace on earth denied,
Since life, to gain a broken end,
Has torn you from my side ?**

**The ramparts of the house of Death
Love cannot pierce or scale,
To tell with what a thirst for breath
The silent captives ail.**

**In that fixed prison-house of form,
All locked and barred about,
Perchance your living will is warm
And battles to be out !**

THE Soul bereaved, the Flesh defiled,
Made strife with Love, and said,
“ Lord, is not mine the living child ?
And is not hers the dead ? ”

And while with piteous plea the two
At hard contention warred,
To search the holier anguish through
Up glanced the dreadful sword.

Then the sad Flesh, the far-defiled,
Caught at Love's Feet, and said,
“ Give her, give her the living child !
And give me back the dead ! ”

“ Believest thou the dead can rise ?
O Flesh, behold thy son ! ”—
Love spake : and to her opening eyes
Living and dead were one !

Out of the heart of night a hand
Of darkness touched my side :
Light of my life, I saw you stand,
And dreamed you had not died.

“ Oh, you look weary, you look old,
And heavy hangs your head :
Come from the night and from the cold,
And creep into my bed ! ”

The Fates that leagued against us still
Had fallen apart in fear,
When warm to all my weary will
I thought to draw you near :

But my quick soul, to love denied,
Smote on its doors in pain :
“ Go back awhile, Beloved, ” it cried,
“ And die, and come again ! ”

So much strong weakness holds me bound
I scarce may lift a hand :
Now being come to holy ground
I have not strength to stand.

For the dear loss to which I cling
So shadows all the past,
That life would seem too bare a thing
Could I look up at last.

O Lord of Light, Who fashionest form,
Grant me no quickening sight !
Make not the wants within me warm,
But bid me look on night.

**SEND forth Thy winds, O God, to blow
The fever from my brain ;
Let all Thy rains and rivers flow
To wash away my stain !**

**And when of all its thousand ills
My body is set free,
Then in Thy mercy bid the hills
Bow down and cover me.**

**And smother out this vital spark
That binds me in Thy sight :
Give darkness, that it may be dark,
And heal my eyes of light !**

Ghosts of sweet wants, ye touch and leave
An unresponsive breast !
Hearing you knock and go, I grieve,
But cannot give you rest.

Ye, while on earth the spring goes round,
Dear wants, can never die.
Now all my spring is underground,
Therefore no wants have I !

Oh, fare ye well, and sup at life,
And find a better bed !
Here living is a weary strife
When all its wants are dead.

WHENEVER blows a passing gust,
I think your ghost goes by ;
Wailing it sifts away the dust
Wherein I long to lie.

Oh, shadow of my missing mate,
Now pass, and give me rest !
Your ghostly pity comes too late
To drive me from your breast.

Is living still my debt to thee
Through whom all joy lies dead?
Have you no welcome yet for me
In your most quiet bed?

Alas, now you have come to rest;
And I have come to grief!
Your love is harder than I guessed
To grudge me that relief.

**O LORD of love, Who holdest light,
Hear Thou the darkened speech ;
Behold the eyes that know not sight
The hands that vainly reach.**

**Thou knowest all ; Thou wilt not grieve
If in the ways of grief
I speak amiss. Lord, I believe ;
Help thou mine unbelief !**

**For as the east is from the west,
And from the north the south,
So from the sorrow of his breast
The utterance of man's mouth.**

**A Prayer
for stone
to cry out**

**HERE name and date are worn away,
Yet stiff upon its shelf
The stony mummer all the day
Lies praying to himself.**

**O stone, thou mockest God with prayer,
So praying without end,
If he, whose dust became thy care,
Hath found in God his friend!**

**O stone, since other needs pass by,
Let my need nearer be :
Still lift to heaven the sightless eye
Of faith, and pray for me !**

Me did self-love or love most move,
Strong will or weak desire ?
Or was love laid on me to prove
How ice may vanquish fire ?

Nay, still my heart cannot undo,
My lips cannot unsay,
That bitter need I had of you,
And could not put away !

But life from death strange virtue draws ;
And, knit with new desire,
Still the love lives in me, though thaws
The ice, though faints the fire.

For life which out of good or ill
Besought one kindred boon,
Here, on death's wave, how clear and still
The waters wash the moon !

THOUGH thou art changed, thou bearest whole
My love through all thy change :
Thou canst not shake me from thy soul
Wherever thou dost range.

So thou from change to change must mount,
And still in mind of me
Shalt come toward the living Fount
Of immortality.

Then from thy face, whom God makes free
To touch the eternal years,
Those waters in a mystery
Shall wash away my tears.

Oh ! strange, 'mid severance of love
New love compelling grows !
Whose Face is this that bends above ?
Whose wounded Hands are those ?

Fair Father Christ, I cannot tell
When else on earth we met :
A dearer love that loved me well
Hath hold upon me yet,

But if Thou lov'st the face I love,
Whose likeness dwells in me,
I will but keep one love above
The love I'll have for Thee !

**Let not the love you learned on earth
Slip ever from your heart :
Into your new celestial birth
Let old love bear a part !**

**So pray, that, though I fall and fall,
And though God's mercy fail,
And though the Saints stay silent all,
Your prayer shall yet prevail !**

**WHERE my word fails thy word amends,
With Paradisal speech :
Thy prayer goes up to further ends
Than I have thought to reach.**

**Till, past all speech, where fails thy prayer
'Mid sights thou canst not read,
Some other, on the ascending stair
Strains out fresh hands to plead.**

**But I, left conscious of my sin,
Wait on, and watch, and wear,
To know when word of me shall win
The slow-ascending stair :**

**And cry, " Have seven times seven sufficed
To bridge the gulfs that part ? "—
When suddenly the Hand of Christ
Has knocked against my heart !**

Out of the earth that holds you bound
All spring comes back to me ;
The honeyed world awakes at sound
Of life the quickening bee.

So from the eater comes forth meat,
And sweetness from the strong :
And honey from beneath my feet
Where you to earth belong.

O love, to you I bend and pray,
Who seeing yet am blind,
Because I cannot put away
A dead face out of mind.

Through the dull mould of my desire
I search with hands that grope,
'Mid ashes of a buried fire,
For love, or faith, or hope.

Lest here I perish without end,
Having no wit to see,—
O ghost of all dead springs, O friend
Of love, arise in me!

**SPRING comes with silent rush of leaf
Across the earth, and cries,
“ Lo, Love is risen ! ” But doubting Grief
Returns, “ If with mine eyes**

**“ I may not see the marks, nor reach
My hand into His side,
I will not hear your lips that preach
Love raised and glorified.**

**“ Except by all the wounds that brake
His heart, and marred His brow
Most grievously for sorrow's sake,
How shall I know Him now ? ”**

**Love came, and said, “ Reach hither, Grief,
Thy hand into My side :
Oh, slow of heart to win belief,
Seeing that for grief I died.**

**“ Lo, all the griefs of which I died
Rise with Me from the dead ! ”
Then Grief drew near, and touched the side,
And touched the wounds that bled,**

**And cried, “ My God, O blessed sign,
O Body raised, made whole,
By this I know that Thou art mine,
Upholder of my soul ! ”**

**THE Earth her troubled seasons brings ;
Low at Love's feet she lays
The broken promise of her springs,
Her tarnished summer days ;**

**And says of all, " Not here the gift :
But out of all of these
Draw Thou, for one too weak to lift,
An offering to Thy knees !**

**" And gather out of all the storms
That flew to find them rest,
The loves that in a hundred forms
Have strained toward Thy breast ! "**

As by the motion of her arc
The moon draws up the sea,
So, through the sense-defeating dark
Love's hold is laid on me ;

Till, in the strife of hearts that yearn
A hidden goal to gain,
I touch the keys of life, and learn
The mysteries of pain ;

And find one law uplifted chief
All other laws above,
That Earth cannot contain its grief,
Nor Heaven contain its love.

There, where Love's moon unveils her snow
On Paradisal trees,
Deep at her inmost heart must go
The beat of far-off seas.

And led through hands of death or birth
To live again or die,
Gathered from all the griefs of earth
All loves as kindred lie.

So, clear of sight from this far place
I can lift eyes above
And see you looking in God's Face,
O face I used to love !

The author has to thank Messrs. Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., for permission to reprint the portion of these poems which first appeared in "All Fellows," Mr. Grant Richards for the use of the poem which appeared in "The Little Land," and the Editors of the "Spectator," "Outlook," and "Dome," for the poems which were first printed in those publications.

Chiswick Press :—Charles Whittingham and Co.
Tooks Court, Chancery Lane, London.

AT THE SIGN OF THE UNICORN.

POETRY.

SHADOWS AND FIREFLIES. By LOUIS BARSAC
Med. 16mo, cloth, gilt, 2s. 6d. net. *Second Edition.*

THE OUTLOOK.—“Mr. Barsac has a genuine gift of expression and a refined sense of natural beauty.”

THE LITTLE CHRISTIAN YEAR. Med. 16mo,
white parchment, gilt top, 2s. 6d. net.

THE PALL MALL GAZETTE.—“Brief poems that are signed everywhere with the sensitive signature of intellectual emotion. . . . The author's singular quality of poetry.”

WILLOW LEAVES. By RUSSELL VEITCH. Med.
16mo, gilt top, 2s. 6d. net.

THE WESTERN MERCURY.—“A really excellent volume of verse . . . natural and effective.”

IN THE WAKE OF THE SUN. By FRED G.
BOWLES. Med. 16mo, gilt top, 2s. 6d. net.

THE STAR.—“The Unicorn Press is to be congratulated on publishing a new lyrical poet of considerable originality and charm,—a poet, I think, to be taken seriously. . . . It has haunted me, sung itself again to me in omnibuses, hummed like a friend in crowded thoroughfares. . . . I think these quotations bear me out in claiming for Mr. Bowles a place among contemporary poets.”

POEMS AT WHITE-NIGHTS. By GORDON
BOTTOMLEY. Med. 16mo, gilt top, 2s. 6d. net.

THE OUTLOOK.—“Power and spiritual significance, and even a contribution to religious knowledge, lie in these poems.”

THE VINEDRESSER and OTHER POEMS.
By T. STURGE MOORE. Fcap. 8vo, cloth gilt, 2s. 6d. net.

THE LONDON LETTER.—“He has achieved his difficult feat miraculously. . . . A poem written in English in 1899 in which the very spirit of the ancient world resides. It reads like a splendid translation from some richly-coloured Greek original.”

OTHER PEOPLE'S WINGS. By T. W. H. CROSLAND. Fcap. 8vo. 6d. net; cloth gilt, 1s. net.

THE OBSERVER.—"His 'Parables' made us aware of his strong gift; his 'Parodies' make us endorse our earlier opinions."

A "LIBER JUNIORUM." £5 5s. net. Lithographed Drawings by WILL ROTHENSTEIN of Aubrey Beardsley, W. B. Yeats, Laurence Binyon, Max Beerbohm, Laurence Housman, and Stephen Phillips, in buckram Portfolio. After 50 copies of each had been printed (by Way, on handmade Van Gelder paper), the stones were destroyed. The Prints are all Signed and Numbered Proofs, and may be had separately at One Guinea each.
[A few remain.]

WESTERN FLANDERS. By LAURENCE BINYON. With Ten Etchings by WILLIAM STRANG. Columbian 4to, (17 x 12). 250 Numbered Copies only. Printed at the Chiswick Press on handmade Van Gelder paper. £2 2s. net.

* * * Twenty Sets of Proof Etchings signed by the Artist are for sale. Particulars on application.

THE SATURDAY REVIEW.—"Mr. Binyon has put a great deal of delicate work into his writing."

LITERATURE.—"The etchings have all the charm which one has learnt to associate with Mr. Strang's name."

THE DOME. An Illustrated Magazine of Literature, Music, Architecture, and the Graphic Arts. Monthly, 1s. net.

* * * "The Dome" is quite unlike the typical magazine of the moment.

THE PALL MALL GAZETTE says: "There is so much that is fresh, so much that is fine, in the work of the younger school of poets, painters, writers, and etchers, that no one of an artistic taste can afford to ignore this unique publication."

THE ARTIST'S LIBRARY.

Edited by LAURENCE BINYON.

HOKUSAI. By C. J. HOLMES. Fcap. 4to. With Twenty full-page Plates (Four in Colours). 2s. 6d. net.

THE MANCHESTER GUARDIAN.—“The first of what promises to be an admirable series. . . Mr. Holmes does full justice to his subject.”

GIOVANNI BELLINI. By ROGER E. FRY. Fcap. 4to. With Three Photogravures and Twenty full-page Plates. 2s. 6d. net.

ALTDORFER, by T. STURGE MOORE; **COZENS**, by LAURENCE BINYON; **GOYA**, by WILL ROTHENSTEIN; **CRANACH**, by CAMPBELL DODGSON; **ALFRED STEVENS**, by D. S. MACCOLL; **CONSTABLE**, by C. J. HOLMES; and **VANDYCK**, by LIONEL CUST are in preparation.

A BOOK OF GIANTS. Drawn, Engraved, and Written by WILLIAM STRANG. Fcap. 4to, 2s. 6d. net.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. By ARTHUR SYMONS. Fcap. 4to, cloth back, gilt. With a Photogravure and Two other Portraits, a Colour-print and Five Black-and-white Illustrations. The Portraits and two of the Drawings have not been hitherto published. 2s. 6d. net.

THE OUTLOOK.—“An excellent monograph.”

SIEGFRIED. Woodcuts by T. S. MOORE. Fcap. 4to, 2s. 6d. net. [In preparation.]

RUDYARD KIPLING. Artist's Signed Proofs (no other state) of the Etched Portrait made from life in 1898, and exhibited in November, 1898, at the New English Art Club. £4 4s. net. [Only Two remain.]

MUSIC.

THE CHORD. A Quarterly devoted to Music. Imp. 16mo, strongly bound in brown boards. Illustrated. 1s. net; or 5s. per annum, post free.

THE OUTLOOK.—“The Unicorn Press has rendered another service to those who follow the best art of the day.”

BAYREUTH AND MUNICH. A Travelling Record of German Music. By VERNON BLACKBURN. Imp. 16mo, boards, 1s. net.

OLD SCORES AND NEW READINGS. Discussions on Musical Subjects. By JOHN F. RUNCIMAN. Imp. 16mo, gilt top, 5s. net.

THE MUSICAL STANDARD (in four column notice).—“He has always something to say, and says it with considerable force.”

THE FRINGE OF AN ART. Appreciations in Music. By VERNON BLACKBURN. With Portraits of Mozart, Berlioz, Gounod, and Tschaikowski. Uniform with “Old Scores and New Readings.” 5s. net.

THE SATURDAY REVIEW.—“In its way a perfect bit of work.”

THE MUSICIAN'S LIBRARY.

Edited by JOHN F. RUNCIMAN.

The following Volumes (Imp. 16mo, cloth, each 2s. 6d. net) are in preparation:

MOZART. By VERNON BLACKBURN.

GLÜCK. By SIDNEY THOMPSON.

PURCELL. By the Editor.

WAGNER. By E. A. BAUGHAN.

At the Sign of the Unicorn, London.

